

Sen. Stafsholt: Evers administration fails sportsmen and rural WI again

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 5, 2021

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Madison, WI –Rob Stafsholt (R – New Richmond) issued the following statement in response to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) unprecedented decision to reject the Natural Resources Board (NRB) fall wolf hunt quota:

“Once again, Governor Evers and the DNR show their complete lack of respect for sportsmen and women across the state of Wisconsin. Their latest stunt of ignoring and defying their own policy board is just another example of why changes need to be made in the Governor’s office and DNR. The lack of transparency with the entire wolf hunt process has gotten completely out of hand.”

“This is not the first time the Evers Administration and DNR Secretary Preston Cole have instructed their department to blatantly ignore state statute. Earlier this year, in a court case in which Hunter Nation sued them, a Jefferson County Circuit Court ruled Governor Evers and Secretary Cole ignored state statute and refused to move forward with a wolf hunting season. They knowingly infringed on Wisconsinite’s constitutionally protected right to hunt. It is time for the Evers administration to start following the law and act in the best interest of Wisconsinites.”

“Over and over again, the DNR has made it clear that they won’t listen to rural Wisconsin citizens’ concerns, as they previously chose not to show up to my Senate Committee Informational Hearing regarding the wolf hunt. Wisconsin outdoorsmen and women deserve basic information, transparency, simplified regulations and improved access to our state’s natural resources. It is my observation that those things will not happen under Governor Evers’ administration.”

“Not only has the DNR repeatedly failed to act in the best interest of Wisconsinites, they’re completely incompetent when they do act. Last year, the DNR created a rule

that no person, while hunting, may use, possess or have under the person's control shot shells containing shot larger than T. In other words, the DNR thought it would be more humane to kill fur-bearing animals with bird shot. I had to author a bill to fix their mistake."

"Since being in office, I have repeatedly met with the DNR and tried to work with them to better serve my constituents. In most cases, they have made the situation worse and I have been left disappointed by their lack of transparency. DNR leadership, most likely at the direction of Governor Evers, has shut the door and ignored both me and my committee—to the detriment of the state. They are clearly more interested in playing political games than doing the work of the people."

"If the Governor and his DNR Secretary don't see a need for guidance from places like the NRB, and the Conservation Congress, then why do they exist? Are they there just to pretend to take the public's input? If Governor Evers is going to ignore them, then maybe it's time for the Legislature to take back its power to make public policy relating to natural resources and cut out the unelected gubernatorial appointees. After all, this Governor and his DNR Secretary have shown they don't care about their decisions anyway."

"I could go on and on with examples of their incompetence and unwillingness to work for the people. The legislature cannot and will not allow the DNR to run amuck anymore, and I will be leading the charge to push for change."